

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6852

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 0604

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MASS, JO, US, UR

SUBJECT: JORDANIAN DELEGATION TO THE SOVIET UNION

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER RIFAI SAYS JAF MILITARY DELEGATION TO SOVIET UNION WAS TOLD USSR READY TO GIVE (AT \$200,000 EACH) MI 8'S OR MI 6 HELICOPTERS FOR DELIVERY IN SIX MONTHS. USSR SHOWED JORDANIANS IMPROVED SA-2 SAMs ON 6 MONTHS DELIVERY TERMS AND OFFERED 1-2 SQUADRONS OF MIG 25'S PLUS TANKS, ARTILLERY, ETC. JORDAN SUSPECTS SOVIET MOTIVES AND PREFERS U.S. EQUIPMENT. RIFAI SAYS JORDAN'S POLITICAL TIES WITH US ARE OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE BUT WISHES FAIRER TREATMENT ON US SUPPLY, GIVEN US FAVORITISM FOR ISRAELIS. RIFAI'S MAJOR POINT: MAY WE BUY US HEAVYLIFT HELOS (FMS NOT COMMERCIAL DEAL) FROM US FORCES INVENTORY? I SUSPECT RIFAI IS PARLAYING KING'S HELICOPTER FIXATION INTO BARGAINING LEVERAGE. END SUMMARY.

1. WHEN I SAW RIFAI FEBRUARY 3 HE GAVE ME A PRELIMINARY READ OUT ON THE REPORT OF THE JORDANIAN AIR FORCE DELEGATION TO THE SOVIET UNION. HE SAID HE WAS GIVING ME A PRELIMINARY STATEMENT ON WHAT HAPPENED AND THAT THE KING WOULD WANT TO BRIEF ME HIMSELF AND HE WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF I DID NOT PROVIDE KING WITH REASON TO THINK I HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY BRIEFED. RIFAI SAID THAT THE DELEGATION HAD BEEN EXTREMELY WELL TREATED IN THE SOVIET UNION AND HAD BEEN SHOWN ALL OF THE EQUIPMENT THEY DESIRED TO SEE (HE SAID WITH TYPICAL RIFAI GUSTO

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THAT THEY HAD SEEN EVERYTHING IN THE SOVIET ARSENAL

INCLUDING WEAPONS WHICH WOULD BE INTRODUCED INTO THEIR MILITARY IN THE FUTURE.)

2. ON THE HELICOPTERS, THEY HAD BEEN TOLD THEY WOULD BE SOLE MI 8'S OR MI 6'S AND THAT DELIVERY COULD BE MADE IN SIX MONTHS. THE DELEGATION RIFAI SAID FELT THE SOVIET MACHINES WERE DEFINITELY INFERIOR TO THE CH 53. THE PRICE THROUGH THE SOVIET COMMERCIAL AVIATION EXPORT OFFICE WOULD BE \$400 THOUSAND EACH. RIFAI SAID SOVIETS HAD THEN INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD GIVE JORDAN THE SAME FIFTY PERCENT DISCOUNT AS SYRIA WOULD GET MAKING THE REAL PRICE \$200,000 EACH.

3. RIFAI SAID ALSO THEY WERE SHOWN AND OFFERED SIX MONTHS DELIVERY ON AN IMPROVED SA-2 SAM MISSILE WHICH HAD A RANGE OF SOME 150 FEET TO 65,000 FEET. ALSO THEY HAD BEEN OFFERED A SQUADRON OR TWO, RIFAI SAID, OF MIG 25'S FOR EARLY DELIVERY. IN ADDITION THEY WERE GIVEN EQUALLY GENEROUS TERMS ON TANKS, ARTILLERY AND OTHER TYPES OF EQUIPMENT.

4. RIFAI THEN NOTED IF IT HAD BEEN PURELY A MILITARY AND FINANCIAL QUESTION, YOU KNOW WE WOULD HAVE HAD SOVIET WEAPONS HERE YEARS AGO. "THAT IS NOT THE POINT. WE HAVE A POLITICAL TIE WITH THE UNITED STATES. AND IN SPITE OF ALL OF THE SOVIET ARGUMENTS AND BRIEFINGS ABOUT THE UNITED STATES WISHING TO KEEP JORDAN WEAK AND ISRAEL STRONG, WE STILL VALUE AND WANT TO KEEP THIS TIE. WE KNOW THAT THE SOVIETS ARE TRYING TO GET INTO JORDAN AND WILL OFFER ALL KINDS OF INDUCEMENTS TO DO SO. THEN AFTERWARD THEY WILL TIGHTEN UP ON SPARE PARTS AND TRY TO INTRODUCE THEIR OWN PEOPLE INTO THE COUNTRY."

5. HE CONTINUED THAT WHAT WE ARE DISAPPOINTED IN IN OUR RELATIONS WITH US IS ALL OF THE DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS ABOUT PRICE, AVAILABILITY, AND THE FUNDING OF OUR PROGRAM. WE KNOW THE PROBLEM YOU ARE HAVING WITH CONGRESS, BUT WE HERE SEEM ON THE VERGE OF WAR AND WOEFULLY UNDEREQUIPPED TO

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DEFEND OURSELVES PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF EQUIPMENT THAT ARE GOING TO ISRAEL AND WILL CONTINUE TO GO TO ISRAEL. WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO ASK FROM YOU IS AN EFFORT TO TREAT US A LITTLE MORE THE WAY YOU DO THE ISRAELIS.

6. AS REGARDS HELICOPTERS, HE ASKED "IS THERE ANYTIHING THAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT LETTING US BUY SOME OF YOUR HEAVY LIFT

HELICOPTERS FROM INVENTORY?" YOU HAVE DONE THIS FOR OTHERS IN THE PAST AND WE WOULD LIKE TO TRY TO COMPLETE THE REEQUIPMENT WHICH WE NEED BEFORE THREE OR FOUR YEARS. I TOLD HIM THAT I COULD SEE SOME MERIT IN THEIR WANTING THEIR AID PROGRAM PRIORITIES TO INCLUDE THE HELICOPTERS WHICH THEY NEEDED SO THEY WOULD COME TO JORDAN AS A GIFT. UP UNTIL NOW WE HAD NEVER HAD ANY OFFICIAL REQUEST TO CONSIDER HEAVYLIFT HELICOPTERS AS PART OF A GOVERNMENT PROGRAM FOR JORDAN. THERE HAD ALWAYS BEEN PREFERENCE FOR A COMMERCIAL DEAL WHICH JORDAN FOUND TERRIBLY EXPENSIVE ALTHOUGH POSSIBLY MORE EXPEDITIOUS THAN THE REGULAR PROGRAM. THERE WAS ALSO THE QUESTION OF HOW QUICKLY JORDAN COULD ABSORB NEW HELICOPTERS.

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7. I SUGGESTED THAT WE MIGHT LOOK AT THIS TOGETHER IN THE MILITARY CHANNELS. I DID NOT KNOW WHETHER WE WOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE USED HEAVY LIFT HELICOPTERS TO JORDAN AND ON WHAT TERMS, BUT WE CERTAINLY COULD ASK.

8. COMMENT: RIFAI WAS CONSISTENT WITH ME AS HE HAD BEEN BEFORE IN USING THE SOVIET TRIP AS AN EFFORT TO TRY TO BARGAIN FOR SOMETHING MORE FROM US. I AM NOT SO SURE THAT THE KING FEELS THE SAME WAY. HE IS OFTEN MESMERIZED BY THE ACQUISITION OF EQUIPMENT WITHOUT RELATION TO WHETHER JORDAN CAN USE IT EFFECTIVELY OR NOT. IN THIS CASE RIFAI MAY BE TRYING TO TURN THE KING'S FIXATION WITH A GOOD DEAL FROM THE SOVIETS INTO A BARGAINING SITUATION WITH US. WE WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO DECIDE WITH SOME CARE HOW WE RESPOND. MY INITIAL

FEELING, IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY SPECIFIC INFORMATION  
ABOUT WHETHER SUCH SMALL AMOUNTS OF SUCH EQUIPMENT ARE  
AVAILABLE FROM INVENTORY, IS TO REVIEW RIFAI'S REQUEST IN  
WASHINGTON AND DETERMINE WHETHER WE CAN BE AT LEAST IN  
PART RESPONSIVE. I RECOGNIZE THAT PRESENT US REGULATIONS  
REQUIRE CHARGING NEAR REPLACEMENT COSTS FOR EQUIPMENT SOLD  
FROM INVENTORY AND THERE MAY NOT BE ANY POSSIBILITY  
OF OFFERING ANY REAL SAVINGS TO THE JORDANIANS, BUT  
WOULD HOPE IT COULD BE LOOKED AT SYMPATHETICALLY.  
WE WILL HAVE FURTHER COMMENTS AND MORE EXPANDED RECOMMENDA-  
TIONS AFTER I SPEAK WITH KING. END COMMENT.  
PICKERING

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## Message Attributes

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